Holiday Ethics Guidance

Partying with Supervisors and Contractors

The Grinch says:

It’s that time of the year again!

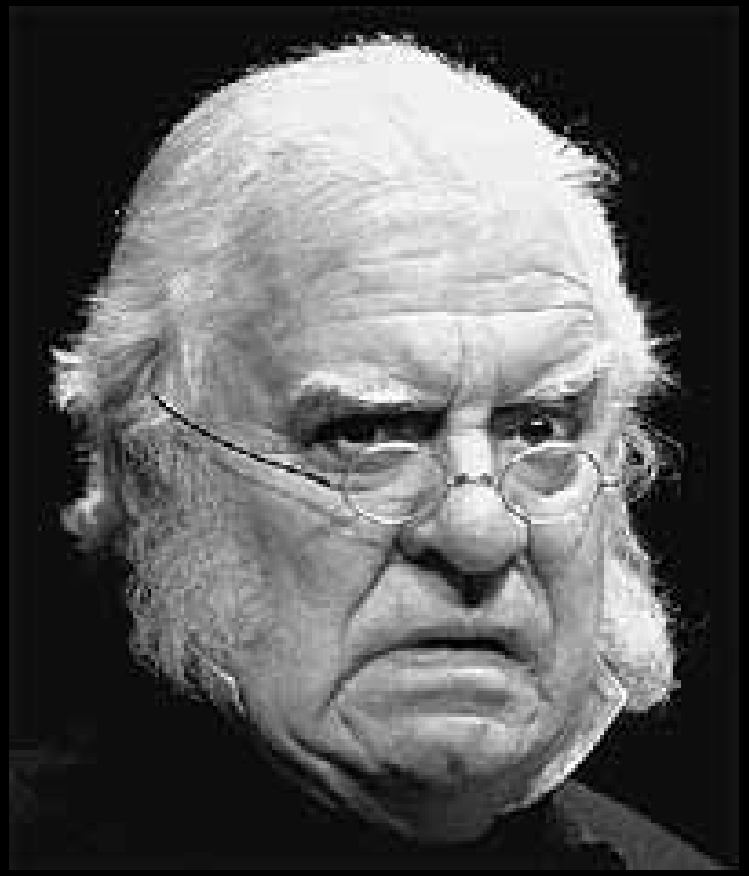
Time for parties and receptions – drinks, food and – yes – even gifts!

Although contractors work side by side with us, they are not government personnel!

Although we love, admire and respect our bosses, there are gift limits!

Gifts From Contractors

Businesses giving gifts? Bah! Humbug! The General Rule is the Government Employees may not accept a gift from a contractor or contractor personnel.



Gifts From Contractors- The Exceptions

- $20/$50 Rule – No buy-down.
- Bona Fide Personal Relationship. Personal gifts paid for by the contractor employee – not the contractor.
- Widely Attended Gathering.
- Invitations open to the public not related to Federal employment – even from contractors.
- Gifts based on outside business or employment relationships

Gifts Between Federal Personnel

The General rule is

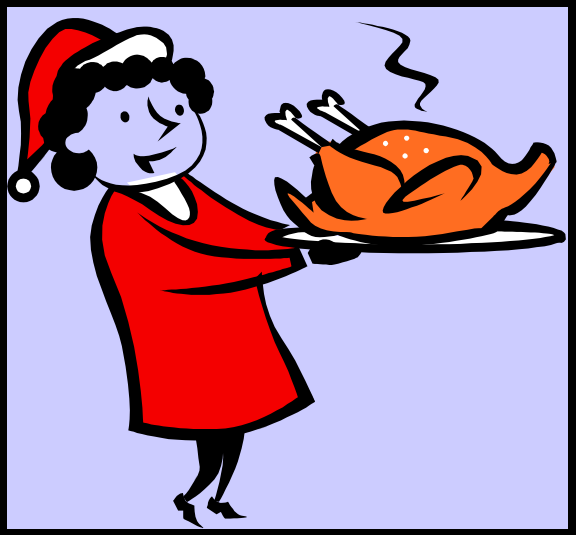
Supervisors may not accept gifts from subordinates or Federal personnel who receive less pay.

Federal Employees Exceptions

- During holiday (recurring occasion basis) supervisors may accept gifts – NOT cash- of $10 or less.
- Food and refreshments shared in the office.
- Social event in subordinate's home – accept hospitality of the type and value customarily given on the occasion.
- Subordinate invited to social event at supervisor's residence.

Holiday Situations

- Office Party (Non-Duty Hours). Contractors and government employees may pay their own fair share of party. Must be on own time.
- Office Party (Duty Hours). Contractor time may not be charged to the government. Contractor employees may pay fair share.



Holiday Situations

- Gift Exchange: The office (including contractor employees) wants to exchange gifts.
- If gifts are given at random or traded blind, then appropriate to the occasion is the standard.
- If names are drawn, the $20/$50 and $10 rules apply.

Holiday Situations

- Private Parties at Federal Employee's Home.
- Invited are government and contractor personnel.
- Federal employee may accept gift from contractor personnel $20/$50. Or, if perishable item, share with guests.

Holiday Situations

- Contractor employee hosts party in home.
- Gift is from a prohibited source.
- $20/$50 rule. Cannot just eat $20 worth if the value is over $20, or buy-down.
- Personal relationship exception may apply.
- Remember appearance.

Questions?
Have a
Happy Holiday!